THE Nation

VOLUME 147 NEW YORK • SATURDAY • SEPTEMBER 3, 1938 NUMBER 10

CONTENTS

THE SHAPE OF THINGS 213

EDITORIALS:

EUROPE MOBILIZES 215

MR. DIES GOES TO TOWN 216

THE NEW CONSTITUTION 216

"THE ATLANTIC PRESENTS" 217

TVA: NOT GUILTY by Paul Y. Anderson 218

THE DRIVE ALONG THE EBRO by Louis Fischer 219

PRESS-WAR ON MEXICO by L. O. Prendergast 222

IN THE WIND 225

ISSUES AND MEN by Oswald Garrison Villard 226

BOOKS AND THE ARTS:

NIGHTMARE WORLD by Franz Hoellering 227

IN THE SHADOW OF MONT ST.-MICHEL by Justin O'Brien 228

TWO VILLAGES by Irina Skariatina 228

INVERTED FABLE by Christopher Lazare 229

DANCE: MARTHA GRAHAM AT BENNINGTON by Lincoln Kirstein 230

Editors
FREDA KIRCHWEY MAX LERNER

Managing Editor
M. R. BENDINER

Literary Editor MARGARET MARSHALL

Associate Editor MAXWELL S. STEWART

Dramatic Critic
JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

✶

Publisher
FREDA KIRCHWEY

Business Manager and Director of Circulation
HUGO VAN ARX

Advertising Manager
MURIEL C. GRAY

The Shape of Things

✶

THERE IS REAL DANGER THAT LIBERALS WHO ought to know better will become confused at all the newspaper talk about Mr. Roosevelt's "purge." Again the press is showing itself the eager instrument of reaction. Just as it called the government-reorganization measure the "dictator bill," so it is applying totalitarian phrases to the new alignment in the Democratic Party. For a liberal to accept the terms that reactionary newspapers use is to give them a tyranny over his thinking. Once you think of the New Deal's fight against Mr. O'Connor in New York, or Senator Tydings in Maryland, or Senator Smith in South Carolina, or Senator George in Georgia as being a purge, you think in terms of a single-party system, manipulated by a dictatorial regime. Actually, any statement of Mr. Roosevelt's is addressed to the voters; they are completely at liberty to repudiate it; and they have actually done so in a sizable minority of the primary contests so far. But democracy requires that a legislative body shall genuinely represent the broad lines of policy in which the majority believes. Mr. Roosevelt is doing his best to clarify those lines by making a personal application of them to notorious cases in which the New Deal has been sabotaged by its supposed representatives. As a New Dealer it is his duty to his program to ask us to choose clearly. As the Chief Executive it is his duty to try for the most effective working arrangement with a Congress elected on sharply defined issues. And as a party leader it is his duty to see that the reactionaries do not capture his party after the people have voted it into power.

✶

SECRETARY HULL'S SECOND NOTE TO MEXICO evades all the major points made in Mexico's reply to his first note. In reaffirming the "recognized rule of compensation under international law," Mr. Hull not only ignores the many exceptions to that rule, including a few in our own history, but fails even to acknowledge the urgency of the crisis that led Mexico to launch its program of land reform. In so doing Mr. Hull makes precisely the mistake which called New Deal ire down

THE NATION, Published weekly at 20 Vesey Street, New York, N. Y. Entered as second-class matter December 13, 1897, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Copyright, 1938, by The Nation, Inc.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on the United States Supreme Court. As far as the letter of the law is concerned, Mr. Hull's case is perhaps debatable. But, as Mr. Prendergast points out so clearly elsewhere in this issue, "eighteen million Mexicans cannot be held eternally in bondage" to property claims, many of which are based on fraud and violence. We hope that Mexico will see fit to submit the claims to arbitration, but it would certainly be within its rights in rejecting for a second time the intolerable contention that property must take precedence over all human and social considerations.

✶

AFTER BEING STALLED FOR MORE THAN A month by floods and bitter Chinese resistance, Japan has launched a vast enveloping movement against Hankow which has made substantial headway in the last few days. Its main Yangtze army appears to have turned southward for an attack on Nanchang, the great pottery center, from which it would be in a position to drive westward to a point on the Canton-Hankow railway some miles south of Hankow. Another army has captured Liuan, from which an attempt will be made to cut the Peiping-Hankow railway a hundred miles north of Hankow. The progress of a third army which has been driving southward in Shansi with a view to cutting the Lunghai railway is unknown, though the Japanese have reported minor successes. While all these units are as yet far from their objectives, it is clear that Japan is determined to gain a major victory before winter. A call has gone out to a million untrained reserves to stand by for military service. The downing of a Chinese-American civil airliner and the machine-gunning of its passengers is comparable only to the attack on the Panay for ruthless disregard of international law. The bombings of Canton have been resumed, and the Japanese are reported to have used poison gas in attempts to break through south of Kiukiang. Japan's new drive should create an increased sense of guilt in the United States, which continues to supply Japan with more than half of its war materials.

✶

THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR IS having itself a time. William Green is valiantly pressing the federation's fight on the National Labor Board, but the fact that the President has reappointed Donald W. Smith to the board over A. F. of L. protest would indicate that Roosevelt does not take Green's fulminations seriously, and this attitude is justified by Green's latest foolish charge of a "plot" between the NLRB and Lewis to unionize Harlan. The New York State Federation of Labor, in convention, followed Green's lead and approved curtailment of the board's powers—on the same day that the United States Chamber of Commerce suggested amendments to the Wagner Act that would practically put it out of commission. At the same convention the state federation denounced the American Labor Party as a C. I. O. tool and came out in ringing defense of its own ancient chestnut policy of rewarding labor's friends and punishing its enemies. Meanwhile, in Atlantic City the A. F. of L. executive council there in session announced the establishment of a maritime department which would take in all classes of sea workers on all coasts and thus challenge the supremacy of the C. I. O. Maritime Federation, and offered sanctuary, with autonomy, to any C. I. O. union wishing to desert the Lewis standard. As a result of the various frictions within the C. I. O., the old guard of the A. F. of L. is feeling its oats. One ironic result is its proposal to set up dual unions and its cultivation of the industrial unionism it formerly spurned. Another is that more wholeheartedly than ever it is proceeding to the business of cutting labor's throat by inviting mutilation of the Wagner Act and delivering its own membership to the mercies of old-fashioned machine politics.

✶

THE STORY OF THE "HOT CARGO" FREIGHT car, laden with school supplies, which has been shuttled from one San Francisco warehouse to another has a good deal more behind it than appears in the press. The cargo comes from Woolworth's, where the C. I. O. warehousemen are on strike. At each new warehouse the workers refuse to unload it, and each time that is the signal for the employers to lock them out. This is clearly a stunt to dramatize the trade-union "threat" to the city. But behind that stunt is a determined effort of the West Coast industrialists to break trade unionism—an effort fully as dangerous as Mayor Hague's. The "hot cargo" freight car is a tiny part of a general mobilization of big industry in California for a showdown with labor. The strike is really being directed by the Committee of Forty-three, and is the latest in a sequence of steps taken since the maritime strike of 1934 to form a united front of big business. After the defeat that the employers suffered in 1934 they decided to change their methods. The new line, urged by the reorganized National Association of Manufacturers, is to discard the old open-shop associations and work through propaganda, citizens' associations, and professions of civic virtue. The Committee of Forty-three directs this work and is also the general staff of all union-smashing operations. Russell Porter, in the New York *Times,* calls them "liberal" business men. They are not liberals but streamlined reactionaries. In addition, the Associated Farmers of California, which have been active for four years in spreading terror among agricultural workers, have made a new tie-up with the industrialists, and threaten to boycott the merchants of any city that tolerates trade unionism. Legislation is also

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

being pushed to compel the registration of all organizers and subject them to police control. Behind both the farm vigilantes and the committee of business men is an interlocking directorate of the most powerful banking and industrial interests of the West Coast. Here is a situation that cries out for the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee. For it is a full-dress rehearsal for the fascist tactics to come.

*

THE HINES TRIAL COMBINES THE LEAST credible features of an Edward G. Robinson movie and an old-fashioned stage play of civic reform. The handsome young district attorney lays bare the relations between the Tammany politician and the head of the underworld, while the wily defense lawyer uses all his cleverness to trip up the h. d. a. Reading the testimony of crooks and perjurers and fixers, one is led imperceptibly into a shadowy world that seems real mainly because the witnesses talk of it in such matter-of-fact tones. It is so real that even gangsters go horseback riding. One feels that the DA is winning his case, though the wily defense lawyer suggests that judging the credibility of such witnesses is a good deal like trying to measure yard goods with a corkscrew and demonstrates his point by catching up a few errors. If the DA gets a conviction he will, of course, be a candidate for governor, and who can stop him? But wait. Times have changed. Goo-goos have gone out of style and so have Republicans, and the DA is both. In a word Dewey is a bit dated, like Tammany itself. There are other forces at work for which the movies never prepared us. The judge before whom the case is being tried is being groomed to oppose the DA for governor because he's a Democrat and strong with labor, and a couple of other fellows who aren't even in the cast are also being mentioned. But if Dewey should lose the governorship after this skilful and valiant preparation he would be almost justified in suing Hollywood.

Europe Mobilizes

SEPTEMBER dawns with Europe in a situation not unlike that which prevailed in the first week of August, 1914. Germany has mobilized a war army of 1,500,000 men. France has countered by staging military maneuvers near the German and Italian frontiers. England has called its battle fleet into the North Sea. The Soviet Union is inducting the 1938 class into military training. France, Russia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia have served notice that they will honor their treaty obligations in the event of a Nazi attack on Czechoslovakia. Even the British government appears to have been aroused to the acute danger of war which has resulted from Chamberlain's policy of "dickering with the dictators." In a speech which had been foreshadowed as urging more concessions by the Czechs, Sir John Simon reaffirmed Chamberlain's declaration of March 24 that Britain might not be able to stay out of a war originating in Central Europe. This was followed, according to the latest report, by official representations at Berlin by Sir Nevile Henderson. To make its position more emphatic the Foreign Office issued a semi-official statement just before Simon's speech praising the Czechs' conciliatory attitude and deploring the abandonment of disciplined restraint by the Sudeten Germans. Winston Churchill went even farther in denouncing the "fabricated stories . . . similar to those which preceded the seizure of Austria."

These warnings should serve a useful purpose. The encouragement given to the Nazis by Runciman's presence and activities in Czechoslovakia has created a situation which is moving rapidly toward war. With its fortifications all but complete and its army fully mobilized, Germany is in an extraordinarily strong position to bring pressure on Czechoslovakia. This it has done with every instrument at its disposal. The Nazi press has worked itself up into a fury of denunciation of "Marxist" intrigue in the Czech republic. Arms have been smuggled into the Sudeten areas in increasing volume in recent months. Diplomatic approaches have been made to Moscow, Bucharest, and Belgrade to sound out their possible reaction in the event of Nazi intervention in Czechoslovakia to "make order." As an immediate result of Horthy's visit, the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia has openly thrown in its lot with Henlein. On top of all this a proclamation has been issued by Henlein's Sudeten German Party authorizing its members to fight in "self-defense" when attacked. This ill-concealed invitation to violence appears to have aroused the British government to a clear realization of the crisis which Runciman's pro-Sudeten attitude had helped create.

It would be folly, however, to assume that the danger of war has passed. The German press has whipped up the people to expect action. It is probable that Hitler himself so counted on Chamberlain's passivity if not sympathy that he started a series of maneuvers which were planned to lead to the forcible annexation of the Sudeten areas. It may be that he has already gone too far to turn back. An even greater danger is to be found in the uncertainties of British policy. We still do not know definitely to what extent Britain is bringing pressure on the Czech government. If it is true, as reported, that Britain is demanding autonomy for the Sudeten Germans, the crisis has only been temporarily postponed. For nothing is more evident than the fact that the Czechs cannot concede autonomy to the Sudeten Nazis without committing national suicide. Should the British push their demand, the Czechs would reject it. But as the events of the past week have demonstrated, Hitler would be quick to take advantage of Britain's moral assistance

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to force a showdown. It is to be hoped that Chamberlain has learned his lesson. But common sense, considering his record to date, tells us that the danger is by no means over.

Mr. Dies Goes to Town

OUR first impulsive reaction to Martin Dies and his Congressional committee on "un-American" activities is one of unbridled mirth. But then, on reflection, it becomes difficult to decide whether to laugh at the fatuousness of his charges and his "evidence" or to feel rather somber about their potential and probable consequences. For if Mr. Dies and his fellow-Congressmen were half as stupid as they give every appearance of being, their behavior would not follow the fox-like pattern that may be traced in it.

Notice that the committee has steered sedulously clear of any evidence concerning fascist activities, shooting off only one faint volley at the Nazis, and even going to the point of muzzling the anti-fascist editor, Girolamo Valenti, when he offered to present proof of widespread government-supported Italian propaganda activities in the United States. Notice that it has deliberately sought to link communism with the C. I. O., the C. I. O. with the New Deal, the New Deal with the cause of Spain, Spain with liberal "stooges," the stooges with the reds again, and the reds with the trade unions. Notice also that he hurried his "investigators" and timed his exposures so as to coincide with the struggle between the New Deal and reaction in the Democratic primaries, and also with the other attacks being made on the C. I. O. by its former friends as well as its constant enemies. If all this is only the arrant lunacy of an ignorant Texas Congressman, then we pray that the tory cause will not enrol any other madmen.

No, Mr. Dies has a good thing here, and he means to go to town on it. He wants personal publicity and the plaudits of professional patriots. He wants to retaliate for the opposition of Labor's Non-Partisan League in his last campaign. But this is not all. Mr. Dies has a far bigger venture afoot—that of organizing a tory-fascist united front against the New Deal and its labor allies.

Alone, of course, he would be the puniest sort of David to tackle such a Goliath. But he has companions. The fact is that America is dotted with incipient fascist groups, closely related to the open-shop industrialists, the public-utility interests, the monopoly forces. An air-view of our social landscape would show a vast sprawling country, deeply furrowed by regional attitudes and differences, crisscrossed by internal feuds among the reactionaries themselves, pervaded by a loose invertebrate fear and insecurity that may at the proper time be drawn into the pattern of fascism. Mr. Dies, who calls himself "America's Number One Demagogue," has a shrewd sense of publicity—if one may judge by his intent to hold hearings of his committee in the setting of Hollywood. Whether he is conscious of it or not, he is taking the one course calculated to unite the various separate strands of fascist feeling into a single design—the sustained anti-Communist campaign. America has had during the past five years a whole series of little regional dictators and sporadic, regional fascist outbreaks. But, geographically isolated, muffled by intra-group quarrels, the flames have flared up only to die down again. The one thing, we know, on which the divided incipient fascist groups in Italy and Germany finally united was anti-communism and anti-trade unionism. *De te, fabula.*

The Dies charges are absurd. Where they are true, they are trite. Where they are new they are fantastically false. One of Mr. Dies's crack investigators has evidently rediscovered Mrs. Dilling's "Red Network." Another has dug up the bones of the dead Lusk and Fish committee reports. A third has deduced that Shirley Temple is a Communist stooge. A few more boners like the one about Shirley Temple and the whole investigation may go up in the flames of laughter. It may. And those who have lived through the red-hunts since the World War are inclined to believe that it will. Yet what finally caused those hunts to flag was not only the absurdly exaggerated charges that linked the most disparate groups in the same conspiracy; it was mainly the fact that America had entered a boom period. Today there are no booms in sight—only recessions and recoveries in a more or less permanent depression.

That is what gives this wretched creature his present importance. If Congress did not realize at the time how dangerous was its grant of money for the investigation, it can now remedy the error. Mr. Dies's money has run out and he will soon be demanding more. He must not get it. Having gone on so reckless a binge, Mr. Dies should now be sent back home to Texas.

The New Constitution

THE proposed New York constitution is a hodge-podge of special legislation, crafty victories for reaction, and a few grudging concessions to liberalism. Given the circumstances by which the Republican Party, with a minority of the votes cast, elected a majority of the delegates to the Constitutional Convention, it is perhaps surprising that the result was not worse. The aura that surrounds a constitutional convention is derived from the notion of a "social contract" that was the chief weapon in the theoretical armory of the English, American, and French revolutionists. In the framing of a constitution the will of the people is presumed to act directly, for this is to be the basic law, superior to stat-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

utes framed by their representatives in legislatures. But New York's delegates were about as representative of the people as were the Founding Fathers. The candidates of both parties were hand-picked. "Elder statesmen" were conspicuous among them. "There is an almost total absence," said the New York *Times*, "of advocates of radicalism."

Senator Wagner struck what should have been the keynote of the convention when he said at one of the early sessions: "The furtherance of human freedom requires more in our time than the prevention of official tyranny. The problem of the day is to meet the threat to freedom that comes from another source—from poverty and insecurity, from sickness and the slum, from social and economic conditions in which human beings cannot be free." Those who ran the convention had other plans. State Supreme Court Justice Charles Poletti made an impressive fight to prevent alienation of the state's water-power resources, but the aluminum-trust, power-trust lobby was too much for him. The railroads succeeded in pushing through an amendment that relieves them of the 50 per cent they must now pay toward the cost of grade-crossing eliminations. A ban on undistributed-profits taxes was written into the new constitution. The power of the Morgans and the Chase National Bank was successfully exerted to win, from a convention otherwise hostile to public ownership, an amendment allowing New York City to spend $315,000,000 in order to buy up its deficit-ridden privately operated rapid-transit lines. A constitutional provision forbidding the state to lend money or credit to private corporations was extended to public corporations, a move designed to make more difficult the entrance of the state or its municipalities into the utility business. Devices which threatened to bring democratic processes directly to bear on government were killed. The initiative for constitutional amendments was hastily interred in committee. New York City Democrats joined with upstate Republicans to pass a provision forbidding the use of proportional representation. The plan of reapportionment of seats in the Senate and Assembly written into the document would tend to give the Republican Party control of both houses. But the greatest victory of the lobbies, at a convention more dominated by lobbyists than any recent session of the legislature, was in the judiciary article. By providing review of facts as well as law in appeals from administrative bodies this article would hamstring regulation.

The convention was not without some victories for liberalism. The worst proposals on power and labor were killed. The red-baiters were badly defeated. A broad social-welfare amendment was adopted, including even health insurance. Public housing was written into the constitution, though in as narrow and restricted a form as possible. A labor bill of rights was passed, but whittled down to the vaguest platitudes. The constitution is to be submitted to the people in nine parts, and we urge our New York readers to vote "No" on every section except those embodying labor's rights, housing, and social welfare.

"The Atlantic Presents"

LAST week we commented editorially upon the *Atlantic Monthly's* contribution to the current press war against the Mexican government. It took the form of a sixty-four-page magazine called *The Atlantic Presents* and contained reprints and digests of articles attacking Mexico's policy particularly as it relates to oil. Elsewhere in this issue our Mexican correspondent deals at length with the larger aspects of this campaign, which is going forward mainly in the columns of such influential newspapers as the New York *Times*.

Here we wish to set down an interesting sequel to our story of the *Atlantic's* little adventure in propaganda. Our readers will recall our investigation of the so-called Committee on Mexican Relations which revealed that the committee was a front for Standard Oil of New Jersey. Subsequently a member of *The Nation* staff, using a fictitious name and his home address, asked to be placed on the committee's mailing list. Since then there has come a steady flow of literature on the Mexican crisis, sometimes bearing the imprimatur of the fake committee and sometimes, frankly, that of Standard Oil. Our staff member experienced all the satisfaction of an amateur detective when he found the other day a copy of *The Atlantic Presents* stuffed into his mailbox, in an *Atlantic Monthly* envelope and addressed to the fictitious name that *could only have been found on the mailing list of the fictitious Committee on Mexican Relations* (read Standard Oil of New Jersey). The magazine came unsolicited and free of charge.

When we telephoned Donald Snyder, publisher of the *Atlantic Monthly*, at Boston, he readily admitted that the supplement had been sold in bulk to "numerous trade associations." He said that he could not remember whether the oil companies were among them, although he conceded the possibility. Thus a publication which offers itself as a source of indispensable information on the Mexican crisis is largely dependent on the goodwill of Mexico's most active enemy. It is irrelevant whether Standard Oil or Mr. Snyder got the idea of this publication first; the important fact is that, under the name of a magazine of established, if slightly tarnished, reputation, a violent barrage against Mexico has been launched at a time of serious tension between that country and the United States. At the conclusion of our conversation Mr. Snyder remarked amiably if a little ambiguously: "Well, we have our racket and you have yours."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TVA: Not Guilty

BY PAUL Y. ANDERSON

Knoxville, Tennessee, August 29

SIX weeks of open hearings have made it painfully apparent that the last Congress, in authorizing a joint investigation of the Tennessee Valley Authority, was outrageously deluded and that the country itself was more or less sucked in on a monumental hoax. The charges of corruption, conspiracy, mismanagement, and favoritism which, by their mere impact, persuaded Congress and the public that a quick and sweeping inquiry was imperative, have already collapsed of their own unsupported weight, ignominiously abandoned by their original authors and sponsors. Virtually all that remains of the fearful indictment is a tentative hypothesis that Director David E. Lilienthal may on some occasion have been guilty of "mental dishonesty." The clairvoyant who advances this arresting theory is Representative Charles A. Wolverton, the well-known Republican purist and metaphysician from Camden, New Jersey. Representative Thomas A. Jenkins, of Ohio, makes it plain that he will subscribe to the Wolverton hypothesis when and if he succeeds in mastering it. Failing in that, he will continue to reiterate that "TVA is a stench in the nostrils of the nation"—a conclusion judiciously expressed by him on the floor of the House prior to accepting appointment on the investigating committee, and repeated here.

By the foregoing I do not mean to convey that the inquiry has been a total loss. Far from it. Although the accusations which precipitated it have gone up in smoke, the investigators already have uncovered enough pay dirt to justify their activities, and all the signs indicate they have barely scratched the mother lode. In a word, the investigation has backfired, and the power interests which thought they saw in it an opportunity to undermine public confidence in the TVA program have been among those most horribly scorched. I list herewith some of the outstanding casualties to date: Wendell Willkie, the hitherto self-righteous head of Commonwealth and Southern, found to have contributed $20,000 of his stockholders' money to a slush fund, part of which was used to buy whiskey and provide dummy voting residences in a futile campaign to defeat a public-power bond issue in Chattanooga; the Chattanooga *Free Press* (O happy name!), a newspaper violently opposed to public ownership, shown to have received double its regular contract rates for a huge volume of power-company advertising; and Dr. Arthur E. Morgan, former TVA chairman, whose wild farrago of charges and insinuations precipitated the inquiry and who has succeeded in corroborating nothing except the suspicion that he was having a brainstorm. There have been lesser victims, such as the local functionaries whose duplicity in favor of the power companies has been exposed, and the list is certain to grow apace.

That more of value has not been accomplished is almost entirely due to the devious and dilatory tactics of Representative Wolverton. Unlike his colleague and faithful emulator, the incredible Jenkins, Wolverton has omitted to state for the record that he holds no brief for the power companies. That is regrettable, for his conduct would not be very different if he were duly and conscientiously engaged in prosecuting TVA in behalf of those interests. His zeal carries him into some awkward situations. Apparently starting from the presumption that there was something rotten in connection with the Berry marble leases, the Jersey lawyer finally was constrained to admit that TVA's legal handling of the matter had been soundly planned and skilfully executed. Indeed, when it was divulged that TVA entered the conciliation agreement with Berry only upon the basis of private information that the award would be in its favor, Wolverton vaulted nimbly to the opposite limb by wanting to know whether the Senator hadn't been "taken advantage of." When Berry himself sawed that one off by pointing out that the agreement was not binding on either side, Wolverton took refuge in a general speculation, and when last seen in connection with the subject was floating uneasily on a vapory suspicion that there must have been some kind of "understanding" between someone and someone else. Jenkins thinks so too.

The reporting of the proceedings in the press at large has been inadequate when not transparently biased against TVA, although John Moutoux is performing an exceptionally thorough and workmanlike job in the Knoxville *News-Sentinel* of the Scripps-Howard chain. Wolverton has contributed to the general misinformation by springing a succession of one-day sensations which made exciting copy the day they were sprung but were hardly mentioned the following day when they faded out. Thus many newspaper readers will doubtless recall the sinister disclosure that minutes of the directors' meeting were "doctored." This testimony was given by Assistant Secretary Charles E. Hoffman, a satellite of Arthur Morgan. But how many remember his explanation the following day? It was that all but a few of the changes were routine corrections made by the directors in his own rough drafts, and that the few exceptions

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were made in the revised draft by order of all three directors because Lilienthal, the only lawyer on the board, "insisted that the language be very precise and exact!" Again, Wolverton asked Chief Counsel Fly whether a certain omission had not occurred in the minutes *and ordered Fly to answer yes or no.* Fly said he would answer yes if he could explain. Wolverton said he could explain later and turned to another subject. Next day Fly found an opportunity to explain that the omission was a secretarial error on Hoffman's part! Still another one-day sensation was provided by the disclosure that TVA had paid $680,000 to the International Agricultural Corporation for phosphate deposits which had cost that company $125,000 three years earlier. The explanation was satisfactory—when it came. The deposits consisted of low-grade ore which had been on the market forty years before the original purchase. But during the succeeding three years TVA chemists had developed a new electric-furnace treatment to supplant the old washing process, thus vastly enhancing the value and usefulness of low-grade ore for commercial fertilizer. A large supply is essential, and for this deposit it had paid approximately eleven cents a ton. The nearest railway is a mile distant. Other available deposits are four to five miles from the nearest railroad. *Hauling from the mine to the railroad costs ten cents a ton.* Pop went another "scandal," but not loud enough to be generally heard.

Where, it will be asked, are the members of the committee other than Wolverton and Jenkins? What is Counsel Francis Biddle doing? Senator Donahey, the chairman, a mild man, has been content in the main to preside over the gavel. Biddle's task of preparing and presenting the evidence has been aggravated by Wolverton's sharp courtroom tactics, in addition to which he has been required to suffer the unpredictable outbursts of Jenkins, who endeavors to fill a deficiency in aptitude with an excess of bad manners. As God is my judge, Jenkins once taxed Lilienthal sternly with saying that Arthur Morgan had accused him of personal dishonesty, whereas it was Jenkins's understanding that Morgan had "merely" charged him with official dishonesty. "There's a lot of difference between personal dishonesty and dishonesty in office," he elucidated. Such scenes are naturally calculated to arouse sympathy for Lilienthal, whose methods do not ordinarily inspire it. He has not lost his addiction to trickiness and sharp dealing, of which his jockeying with Berry is a good illustration, although not the first. Harcourt Morgan's transparent candor is much better suited to the service of TVA's ends. In the last week, however, a different atmosphere has pervaded the hearings. One reason for the change is the arrival of Senator Schwartz, of Wyoming, who has intervened forcefully to halt the hazing of Biddle and his witnesses by the self-elected "prosecutors." Chairman Donahey has shown signs of diminishing patience, and the extremely able Representative Mead, of New York, is taking a more aggressive part in the proceedings. These developments, coupled with the spectacular results of the brief expedition to Chattanooga, have enormously heartened Biddle and his assistants, who also have been reinforced by the arrival of competent investigators from Washington. The investigation is looking up.

The Drive Along the Ebro

BY LOUIS FISCHER

Barcelona, August 20

REPUBLICAN Spain is calm, strong, and conscious of the justice of its aims and of the injustice which the world is perpetrating against it. Two recent battles will compel a general reassessment of the military outlook. In May the rebels moved on Valencia. They were certain—and according to their time-dishonored practice they announced it—that this would mean the end of the war. But they could not even reach Sagunto. Franco's artillery fire was the heaviest of the war. His airplanes bombed the government lines mercilessly. The Loyalists' chief weapons were rifles, machine-guns, improved discipline and organization. These won. Franco lost no fewer than 20,000 men in this vain attempt to break the republican lines.

The offensive on the Ebro, which started on July 25, was conceived, and for two months meticulously and secretly prepared, as a diversion to relieve the pressure on the Castellon-Sagunto front. But before it began, the insurgent advance in that area had been arrested. The Battle of the Ebro became a thing in itself, and its practical and moral values are considerable. First of all, it put aviation in its place. The republican leader best informed on such matters tells me that the Italian government has 500 airplanes in Spain, the German government 300. The Spanish government has less than half as many. The Ebro offensive was carried out with practically no air force. The Loyalists have had a limited number of victories in the war: Guadalajara in March, 1937, turned an Italian attack into a rout because the government used its air force to good advantage while the Italian tanks were bogged in the muddy terrain. During the first part of the Brunete offensive—in July, 1937—the government was master of the air. It also benefited

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from the element of surprise, from careful planning, and from its accumulation of war material. At Belchite, in September, 1937, the rebels were outmaneuvered, and the emerging government army showed its perseverance in hand-to-hand combat and in storming difficult positions. The capture of Teruel in December, 1937, may be explained by a combination of surprise and temporary superiority in the air. Teruel was regained by Franco because he concentrated great numbers of cannon and planes against it. But a similar maneuver in the east this spring failed to gain its objective, and the Loyalist victory on the Ebro was achieved although the republic was woefully outmatched in the air. Ever since the government occupied the 300 square kilometers on the right bank of the Ebro the whole area has been peppered with heavy bombs. The other day at the front I counted 103 rebel planes, mostly bombers, in twelve hours of daylight, and, incidentally, one machine took the trouble to descend to 300 meters over my automobile and drop four fifty-kilogram bombs within a hundred meters of where I crouched in a gutter. One fell twenty meters from me. No harm done. Bombings from the air may demoralize bad soldiers, but they kill few people. And they do relatively little damage even to property.

Between July 25, when the offensive opened, and August 1, when it reached its maximum extension, the government forces had 66 dead and 4,965 wounded, half of them light cases.* In the same period, Lieutenant Colonel Modesto, the commander of the Army of the Ebro, tells me, the Loyalists took 5,000 prisoners, and the rebels suffered casualties estimated at 6,000. He said his men captured more ammunition than all Catalonia had had, and the arms taken sufficed to equip an entire new division. Modesto offered me Franco sherry and Franco ham, and his soldiers are still enjoying the fruits of the rebel quartermasters' forays. The prisoners surrendered after little or no resistance, and in several cases prisoners helped Loyalist squads corral more prisoners. If the government won a few more victories Franco might have only Moors and Italians left.

The first government units began crossing the Ebro at 2 a.m. on the morning of the twenty-fifth. The river there is about 150 meters wide and flows rapidly. The troops crossed in rowboats or walked over pontoon and trestle bridges scarcely wider than a truck. One battalion, eager to support the men who had preceded it, swam across. The next day the Italo-German air force arrived, and in the ensuing twenty-four hours dropped 140 tons of bombs on the river, destroying just one bridge. (There is a sham bridge which is not a bridge, and they have wasted their missiles on that too.) The real heroes of the advance are the bridge-construction workmen, on whom droves of planes have unloaded their explosives. The big pebble beach at Flix is now pocked by deep craters made by bombs falling wide. But the men go on working under this hail of dynamite. No sooner is a bridge destroyed than its reerection is launched, and though the transport of men and material from one bank to the other has been hampered, it has never been seriously interfered with. I crossed toward Gandesa at midnight by the Benisanet bridge—as one approaches, the driver must mind the holes—and returned to Barcelona by the Flix bridge during daylight. Four otherwise intelligent men preferred to chance a bombing to waiting two hours until dark. Today the rebels are massing infantry opposite the government lines and subjecting them to murderous artillery fire and bombings. Franco may attempt another Teruel. But seven hard-fought months have passed since that setback, and the Loyalist infantry has grown stauncher. In a war no development is impossible. Franco may reoccupy the Ebro territory he lost three weeks ago—but only at terrific expense. In the Levant the lines are hardly likely to sway to the government's disadvantage. The slogan now is: "Estremadura must become a second Levant."

More than ever it is flesh against steel—flesh motivated by profound faith and conviction, steel propelled by foreign mercenaries and wavering minds. The Loyalist army is better equipped than ever; airplanes have been imported. Franco's armaments are still far superior, but he lacks men. The Moors are being decimated. On the Ebro, African boys of fifteen and sixteen fought in the "holy war" against the "reds." If the Italians and Germans were withdrawn, and if the French staff stopped French Moors from entering Mussolini's legions, the rebel cause would suffer a severe setback. Hence Burgos's reluctance to accept even the leaky British plan for the evacuation of foreigners from Spain. Only tiny remnants of the International Brigade will remain six months from now. Already it has no independent existence, having been merged with Spanish brigades. Franco, on the other hand, needs his Hessians. Indeed, he is calling for more.

The government's military strength will reach its high point in the summer of 1939. Franco can hardly win before then. The coming twelve months will not bring a final decision on the field of battle unless radical changes occur in the international situation and in the conditions and spirit behind the fronts. Two years of war are no joke, and a certain amount of war weariness exists, especially in Catalonia, which began to feel the war only six months ago. Perhaps war has not yet become a habit to the Catalans. It is unpleasant to be always hungry and always exposed to bombs. (Mercifully, there have been only six raids on Barcelona in the last fortnight.) Folks

*In the New York *Times* of July 28 William P. Carney gave currency to a fantastic report that one republican regiment alone had lost 1,000 killed, drowned, and prisoners. He also said that the Ebro offensive had failed to check Franco's advance on Valencia. Doesn't he read Salamanca's communiqués? The advance was checked before he wrote those words.—L. F.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

behave quietly during and after air attacks; in fact, the other day a tropical rain made them run faster than they do for the raiding siren. Citizens hang on the radio to hear the military communiqué, and if it reports a success the stomach gnaws a bit less. The food situation will grow worse this winter. Spaniards who are prepared to suffer and die think that anti-fascists abroad should at least be willing to part with a day's pay a month to feed the undernourished. Spain is the scapegoat for the world's inability to solve its problems. This is a preventive war, the war which has postponed and may continue to postpone a larger European conflict. The 700,000 men in the Loyalist army are, in effect, a British army fighting for British interests, and a French army, and the army of the League of Nations, and the army of international pacifism. But the outside world starves the civilian population on which this army depends.

Normal life persists stubbornly. At the frontier station of La Jonquera the Spanish customs official put on white gloves before digging into my suitcase. Along the road to Barcelona workers pruned the fat sycamore trees, and an old man who said he never had enough to eat cut the weeds that grew by the highway. In my hotel the head waiter wears a tuxedo and shows us a typewritten menu on a card embossed in gold, although there is no choice of dishes. Despite the shortage of soap the women are fragrantly clean and wear immaculate summer clothes even in the food queues. People laugh and smile, and the cafes and promenades are choked with apparently leisurely and relaxed men and women. Fine shoes, clothes, jewelry, and paintings can still be bought at moderate prices in Barcelona, where the bread ration is only 150 grams per person per day. A package of pipe tobacco marked 3 pesetas 35 centimos sells for 600 pesetas, and a packet of American cigarettes opens all hearts. Hardships notwithstanding, the Spaniards are polite, considerate, easygoing. In no way do they look or behave like a nation on its back. I have seen worse conditions in Soviet Russia during peace years. To be sure, races differ, but I think the Spaniards have much stamina and endurance. They were never spoiled by plenty.

The game of politics rolls merrily along. A few politicians are skeptical about an ultimate Loyalist victory. They therefore advocate an armistice, though when pressed they are not quite sure that Franco would grant one or that the government army would accept it even if all the statesmen did, which is extremely doubtful. The staunchest mediationists are to be found among the bourgeois Catalans. President Azaña also has a scheme for a truce and a plebiscite. A plebiscite in Franco territory with fascist troops supervising it? It would be a unanimous *Ja.* In May the Cabinet offered Indalecio Prieto, right-wing Socialist and former War Minister, the ambassadorship to Mexico. Azaña telephoned to Paris and persuaded him not to accept. Without Prieto the left republicans would be isolated and reduced in influence. The Socialists are divided. Last week their national committee met, voted confidence in Prime Minister Negrin, and elected a new pro-Negrin executive which includes representatives of all factions—Caballero, Negrin, Prieto, Besteiro, del Vayo, and others. Behind this semblance of unity is some reality. But the phenomenon which haunts the European proletarian movement—the mounting bitterness between Socialists and Communists—has not spared war-torn Spain. There are Socialists who accuse the Communists of wishing to monopolize jobs and propaganda. The Communists charge that the Socialists work too little and complain too much. The truth is that the Communists' saving dynamism and discipline can have unpalatable by-products. The Socialists, as a midway group, are ground between bourgeois republicans and Communists. Those who dislike both, sulk or dream of a bridge to the Anarchists, whom they formerly reviled. The Anarchists are fighting more ardently at the front and less so in the rear. But some of the vocally most militant Socialists are defeatists and therefore forfeit popular support, for whatever past leaders may think, the people and above all the army insist on a new, anti-fascist Spain, which alone can guarantee Spanish independence. That is why today Negrin and del Vayo are the republic's natural spokesmen. They reject compromise. They have faith. Azaña, who lacked the determination to prevent the war, lacks the power now to end it on his terms.

As for Franco, the fact is that he has not won the war despite initial advantages and subsequent unrestricted aid from abroad. Knowing the impatience of his subjects, he has promised them peace on numerous occasions, for their heart is not in the war. Many Spaniards on his side resent the foreign invasion and the Moors just as bitterly as the Loyalists do. Falangist newspapers attack the Catholics, and the argument between the Pope and Mussolini on racialism is sure to exacerbate this antagonism. Falange leaders are frequently arrested. Their names have been published. Franco diplomats abroad suggest the restoration of the monarchy as a solution of the problems of the republic. They forget how simply Alfonso was dismissed in 1931. Despite political differences among the Loyalists, unanimity exists on the general social and economic direction of the future regime. But in the rebel zone the programs vary from monarchy plus feudal agriculture to the totalitarian state plus paganism and expansionist imperialism. Franco's uprising was retrogressive and calculated to perpetuate the old, backward Spain which had become intolerable to the majority of the people. Intervention injected new ideas of social change. But they have struck no root, and their carriers are symbols of hated foreign domination. All Hitler's planes and all Mussolini's men cannot resolve this fundamental difficulty. Indeed, they necessarily aggravate it.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Press-War on Mexico

BY L. O. PRENDERGAST

*Mexico City, August 22**

WHATEVER virtues from a technical diplomatic point of view may be ascribed to Secretary Hull's recent note to Mexico, it is a piece of social unrealism that would be hard to surpass; it might well have borne as a prefatory motto the ancient jingle ending, "Hang your clothes on a hickory limb, but don't go near the water." "The issue," it states, "is not whether Mexico should pursue social and economic policies designed to improve the standard of living of its people. The issue is whether in pursuing them the property of American nationals may be taken by the Mexican government without making prompt payment of just compensation to the owner. . . ." It so happens, however, that the Mexican government cannot move an inch in pursuance of those policies without coming into head-on collision with the foreign vested interests which control a great proportion of the nation's most important economic resources. Mr. Hull's statement of the issue, therefore, is an invitation to Mexico to abandon the program itself. I don't suppose this cynicism was deliberately intended, but the lack of comprehension of the Mexican problem revealed by his note can certainly be productive of no good results in the immediate relations between the two countries.

There is very little doubt that the State Department's move came as a response to the tenacious press campaign of recent months and was a sort of defense against the charge of American complicity in Mexican bolshevism. The theme of the New Deal's criminal responsibility for Mexico's excesses has been repeated *ad nauseam,* with a good deal of gratuitous abuse for the good-neighbor policy which is permitting Mexico's intolerable lack of respect for the sacred property rights of American investors and adventurers. Latterly a secondary theme has been introduced into the propaganda symphony: Mexico must be saved from the consequences of its own folly by the indulgent parent whose former sparing of the rod was the chief cause of the spoiled child's erring ways. It fell to George Creel to make the most authoritative statement of this formula in an article in *Collier's* (July 23), the impertinent title of which tells the whole story in six words: Can We Prevent Chaos in Mexico?

But Mr. Creel cannot claim to be the originator of the new line. The prolific Frank L. Kluckhohn, Mexican correspondent of the New York *Times,* enunciated it some months ago. "Without lifting a finger," he wrote in the *Saturday Evening Post* (February 5), "we have let our next-door neighbor set fire to his house." Kluckhohn himself at that time was only partially inflamed by the missionary spirit. The burden of his analysis of the Mexican question was the complaint that Washington, by its silver-purchasing policy, was practically subsidizing the Cárdenas "campaign" to oust all American capital and to divert Mexican trade to Germany, whose 15 per cent share of the Mexican market, as compared with the 60 per cent American share, he viewed with considerable trepidation. "It must be stressed," he went on, "that Washington, perhaps as much as Cárdenas, is guilty in this matter. The State Department could have halted this drive before it began. . . . Yet the State Department takes the attitude that the United States has no responsibilities either to Mexico or to its own nationals. . . ."

The remedy, obviously, was to cut off silver imports and so starve Cárdenas into a decent respect for American interests. This economic sanction was applied after the oil expropriation, when the Treasury Department suspended purchases of Mexican silver. Creel approvingly notes that this was an "effective reprisal," but he makes an alarming *ex post facto* discovery of a fly in the ointment that Mr. Kluckhohn (and the New York *Times,* which editorially applauded the Morgenthau decision) had overlooked, namely, that the measure was "one that cut both ways, for the money we *gave* Mexico was returned for the purchase of commodities, and *it also happens that American interests operate 70 per cent of the silver mines, sending the profits back into this country*" (my italics).

Now this circumstance, although Mr. Creel evades the issue, is one of the chief determinants of the Mexican problem. "In all except a limited number of the so-called [Latin American] republics," he says, "the resources are only sufficient to provide comfortably for 10 per cent of the population. . . ." This is almost literally true, but not for the reason Mr. Creel offers. All these countries are prevented by inadequate capital resources from transforming their primitive agricultural economy into that modern industrialism which might some day provide for almost 75 per cent of the population. And the principal reason for their failure to accumulate the necessary capital has been precisely the constant sucking off of the wealth

* Mr. Prendergast's article was written four days before publication of the second Hull note, which is discussed in our editorial columns this week. The criticisms of Mr. Kluckhohn were, at the request of the New York *Times,* submitted to him for reply. No answer had been received at the time of going to press.—EDITORS THE NATION.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

produced, which, as Mr. Creel innocently observes, the foreign owners of the natural resources send back to their home countries in the form of profits.

> The trouble with Mexico [he continues] is that there has never been any honest and intelligent handling of her resources. Along with primitive methods, there have been tragedies of exploitation, but Mexican politicians have been just as much responsible as the "foreign concessionaires" they love to denounce. President after president has come and gone without other purpose than to feather his own nest and the nests of a *Plunderbund*, and all have bellowed about "foreign rascals" to cover their own thieveries.

Perhaps Mr. Creel knows what he means by "honest and intelligent handling" of resources owned and controlled by foreigners. Frankly, I don't. However, I do know that every time Mexico has attempted by legislation to take a step toward that goal the foreign benefactors and their apologists have screamed bloody murder. Certainly many Mexican presidents and officials have been notoriously corrupt. But who corrupted them? As a matter of historic fact, their corruption has always been in inverse ratio to the complaints of foreign capital against them. The plain truth is that foreign capitalists in Mexico adore corrupt governments and the crooked *politicos* whom they can promote into Mr. Creel's 10 per cent class, just as they abhor any attempt at regulation that might reduce the profitable anarchy on which they have thrived. Whatever Mr. Creel's objections to Cárdenas may be, the objection of these foreign interests is that he cannot be bought. Hence they are now getting ready to "prevent chaos in Mexico."

Nor, if the chaos is tardy in putting in its appearance, will they be reluctant to hasten its arrival. *Newsweek* for July 4 contained the following ominous comment:

> Waving the "big stick" over Cárdenas's head [the American oil firms think] could conceivably give his local opponents enough moral support to overturn his government peaceably. This is the opinion of those who believe that Mexico is headed for a bloody revolution.

Mr. Creel shares this fear:

> Granted, however, that we did exert economic pressure to the limit . . . the Cárdenas administration would fall with a Humpty-Dumpty crash. And after that? Ask any well-informed observer, and he will testify that there is not a chance for any rightist group to take over. It is a proletarian horde that will seize power, its excesses inevitably precipitating savage civil war, making Mexico another Spain.

These words are a measure of Mr. Creel's understanding of Mexico. "Any well-informed observer," unless he perjures himself, will testify that if the Cárdenas government is overthrown it will certainly be succeeded by the fascist groups now frantically engaged in the search for a leader. This certainty prompts the efforts to browbeat Cárdenas into a "satisfactory settlement" under the threat to unleash the chaos which these gentlemen profess to deplore but will unhesitatingly resort to (as they have in the past) if he refuses to yield—as soon as public opinion abroad has been persuaded that all Mexico's woes are self-inflicted.

On July 18 *Newsweek* renewed the offensive with a signed piece by Raymond Moley himself, entitled Hell Bent for Chaos. The familiar jibes about American "gratuities" to Mexico are again dusted off, and are followed by a touching tribute to the "statesmanship" and "strong, intelligent guidance" of ex-Führer Calles. Calles, of course, was one of those "cooperating" presidents whose corruption it is now considered bad taste to mention. "Everyone in Mexico knows . . . that the "Daap" [the government press bureau] is as strict a system of censorship as those of Russia, Germany, and Italy," Moley pontificates. "Only that which will glorify Cárdenas and his Six-Year Plan is permitted publication." I confess I am staggered by the blatant error of this assertion; I suggest that Moley have translations of the Mexican press read to him. Incidentally, *Novedades*, one of the more scurrilous representatives of the Mexican fascist press, was once identified in a dispatch (April 17) by Kluckhohn as a "left-wing" newspaper, probably to lend color to one of his frequent quotations from it. Moley winds up, of course, with an echo of the new formula: "The fruit of Cárdenas's regime may be . . . a complete breakup of orderly government in Mexico."

The kind of press Mexico is regularly getting in the United States may best be judged, however, by the *Times* dispatches of Frank L. Kluckhohn. Unlike the majority of the correspondents here, Kluckhohn attempts to deal with the larger issues in addition to covering spot news, but his numerous theories, from which he suffers as some men suffer from hives, often betray him into ludicrous contradictions. Thus he finds that labor unions are "red" and "officially dominated" at one and the same time, that "thousands of strikes were given an official okay" to keep labor "happy." The unfortunate peons are guinea pigs for harebrained social experiments, the press is "muzzled" and "controlled," and only the army, apparently, is a factor deserving serious attention. Mexico is headed toward the "totalitarian state" under the guidance of an "enigmatic president who has visions of reestablishing an Indian nation based upon socialism (April 10), although in the above-cited *Post* article "a picture of a nation developing capitalism on an intensely nationalist scale is disclosed," to the applause of America's "professional liberals," who "are convinced that, since Mexico's movement is nationalist, it must be holy."

In the last few months a certain waspishness has been discernible in Kluckhohn's dispatches. Its possible cause may be found in the story that appeared on March 17:

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> There were growing indications that the government was caught on the horns of a dilemma and was searching frantically for any dignified manner of getting on safer ground. . . . For months the oil problem has had the aspects of an international poker game in which the government thought the companies were bluffing. When the showdown came yesterday and the companies refused to bow to the government's ultimatum, it left officials in a peculiar position, without precedent for action.

The exact reverse, of course, turned out to be the case; on the following day President Cárdenas uncompromisingly called the companies' bluff by issuing his expropriation decree. Kluckhohn must have realized how distressingly he had been caught napping, for he has since been taking his annoyance out on Mexico in a one-man war to prove that Cárdenas has plunged the nation into hopeless misery. His contradictions multiply, while the tone becomes steadily more strident. The oil workers, he says, are unhappy and worse off than before; oil production is being maintained on a drastically reduced scale only by means of an "iron dictatorship" over the rank and file; the government has "ordered" labor to lay off strikes, but Congress is unaccountably in "revolt against exclusive labor domination of Mexico"; and although Mexico is treacherously attempting to solve its problems by selling oil to the fascists, sooner or later, he strongly intimates, the companies will have to be invited back to save the industry from collapse.

Kluckhohn is greatly incensed because Mexico has sold $10,000,000 worth of oil to W. R. Davis and Company, who in turn have sold part of it to Germany. President Cárdenas offered last March not to sell oil to the fascist nations; he never undertook, however, to starve his country to death in loyalty to a principle that no one else in the world lives up to. It is one of the contradictions of the present world imperialist struggle that Mexico, whose anti-fascist principles and courageous defense of democracy in the cases of Ethiopia, Spain, and China are well known, has been forced by the democratic countries to sell oil to Germany and Italy in simple self-defense. This circumstance has been seized upon by the oil companies and the American press as a means of alienating the support Mexico has received from liberal groups in the democratic countries. When Standard Oil and Royal Dutch Shell stop trading with the fascists, this charge will come with better grace.

In the Cedillo revolt Kluckhohn again missed the boat. On May 17, just one day before the rebellion broke out, he wired, ". . . if the government hoped to prod General Cedillo into action *it has failed, as was a foregone conclusion*" (my italics), and again he tried to disguise his own lack of discernment by an effort to pump into that sorry episode a content that not even its most sanguine sympathizers would claim for it. His reporting of the revolt reached sublime heights when he cabled that the San Luis Potosí peasants were backing the movement because they refused to be herded into the government's "socialistic farms" and resented its attempt to deprive them of arms they had for years been "using for hunting." But he has not explained why the Cedillo movement collapsed overnight as soon as the government entered the state to carry out in earnest the agrarian reform which Cedillo, in connivance with the local land barons, had sabotaged for eighteen years.

In reporting labor matters Kluckhohn is seriously hampered as he has made himself so obnoxious to the labor movement that he is cut off from many news sources. This may explain his reports of last July that the mining industry was the latest victim of the duplicity of Mexican workers, his cable of June 25 that the Confederation of Mexican Workers is anti-Semitic, and his dispatch of August 8 in which he announced that in preparation for the coming Latin American Labor Congress "labor leaders here are drafting a resolution that all United States businesses in Latin America be forced to pay wages equal to those in the United States for the same types of work."

It is, of course, only the great prestige of the *Times* that gives Kluckhohn any special importance—that and the fact that his articles so clearly furnish the raw material for such fantasies as those of Creel and Moley. Underlying their collective barrage, however, is the general attack of the American conservative press on the Cárdenas administration, an attack with a double motive: first, to depict the Mexican government as an extremely radical and somewhat loony dictatorship bent on the destruction of all American property interests and on the erection of a "totalitarian state" which these inspired political theorists variously characterize as fascist or communist according to the needs of the moment; second, to ascribe a large share of the blame for this unhappy state of affairs to the Roosevelt Administration and the good-neighbor policy (see, for example, the *Times* editorial of August 16), again for two reasons—to build a fire under Roosevelt and Hull hot enough to force them into action against Mexico, and to supply additional ammunition to the reactionary campaign against the New Deal in the coming Congressional and Presidential elections.

The State Department's note to Mexico of July 21 represented a long stride toward the achievement of one of these purposes. In spite of its scrupulous avoidance of any mention of the oil controversy, this document, as the American press instantly recognized, was obviously intended to pave the way for later representations on behalf of the oil companies. For all its friendly tone and pleasant expressions of sympathy for Mexico's ambition for social justice, the note does not depart essentially from the thesis of former, less liberal regimes in our

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

State Department that property rights always take precedence over human rights. The rather smug cataloguing of New Deal reforms carried out with prompt compensation to affected property-owners is hardly relevant. Mr. Hull will scarcely maintain that the economic conditions of the two countries are thus comparable. He appears also to have overlooked the fact that the New Deal has aroused the most venomous opposition within the United States from the very interests whose properties he is preparing to defend in Mexico.

What is most disturbing about the note, however, is its stubborn refusal to look the facts in the face. Twenty-eight years of revolutionary upheaval in Mexico ought by this time to have made it plain that no enduring basis for untroubled relations between the two countries can be established until the urgent need of social progress for the Mexican masses is recognized. The Cárdenas administration has undertaken to advance the program artificially dammed up by the Calles-Morrow settlement not because of any inherent hostility to foreigners but simply because the very existence of decent democratic government in Mexico is dependent on the rapid elevation of the Mexican people from their present subhuman standard of living. The alternative is to shove Mexico back into the mire from which the country has been making heroic efforts to free itself and to establish a gendarme state subservient to foreign economic interests and maintaining power over its own people by terror alone.

If the New Deal wishes to realize the ideals implicit in its banner, it will have to accept the proposition that the well-being of Mexico cannot be secured without damage to the property interests of foreigners. Eighteen million Mexicans cannot be held eternally in bondage to the property claims of a group of American investors, some of whom acquired their holdings under circumstances that will not bear scrutiny and many of whom have recovered the value of their investments several times over during the decades of unrestrained exploitation of Mexico's human and natural resources. The problem cannot be solved by blind insistence on the letter of the law. Moreover, as the Mexican government's reply pointed out, the juridical principles on which the State Department's case is based are by no means unassailable. The only settlement with Mexico that will work without storing up multiple difficulties for the future will include a frank recognition of Mexico's needs and a scaling down of property claims to Mexico's capacity to pay without sacrificing its social program. In the long run in international relations it comes to that always; no country can be made to pay what it hasn't got; attempts to collect debts by force only make the debtor's position worse and reduce the possibilities of ultimate payment. A realistic acceptance of this now would save both countries an incalculable amount of grief, suspicion, and hostility, and prevent, in Mexico at any rate, much bloodshed.

In the Wind

AN AMERICAN missionary who recently returned from the Far East aboard the Empress of Japan is reported to have brought back a sensational exhibit. It is a sack filled with fragments of Japanese munitions which landed on Chinese soil—all identifiable as made in America.

PAUL ANDERSON attributes the following story to an extremely trustworthy reporter who covered the Tennessee primaries. Boss Ed Crump usually takes the precaution of counting the votes the night before they are cast; this time, being certain of the outcome, he decided that wasn't necessary. But Shelby County gave his slate so vast a majority that Crump feared people would be suspicious. Hence he instructed his henchmen to alter the returns slightly—to give the opposition a more impressive total.

WHEN A German publisher brought out, soon after the war, an edition of "The Peasants," by the noted Polish author W. S. Reymont, very few volumes were sold because Germans were not eager to read about Poles. In 1924 the Nobel literature prize was posthumously awarded to Reymont and sales rose slightly. When the Nobel peace prize was awarded to Ossietzky, Hitler declared war on all things identified with Nobel awards, and the sales of Reymont's book fell off sharply. Its publisher's latest advertisement announces that "for his masterpiece, 'The Peasants,' Reymont was in 1924 awarded the Nobel prize, which at that time was still an honorable thing."

IN A column of *Our Sunday Visitor,* a Catholic weekly published at Huntington, Indiana, this note appeared on August 21:

> We have had several fine letters telling us of a splendid meeting for priests held recently at Father Coughlin's Shrine of the Little Flower. The meeting was addressed by Homer Martin, who told of his efforts to purge the United Automobile Workers' Union of Communists.

CROSS-COUNTRY: The State of Kentucky's official quarterly announces that "if the 1938 motorist is looking for unique and natural beauty coupled with twentieth-century progress he will find it in abundance in Harlan County." . . . The Chicago *Tribune* mercilessly edited—with its own additions—Associated Press dispatches on primaries, despite the A. P. rule against such changes. . . . Meyer Levin writes that his and the union's dispute with *Ken* ended amicably with union charges withdrawn. . . . The editorial in the New York *Post* from which President Roosevelt quoted in his address on the primaries was not planted beforehand as some reports hinted; its use was a surprise to the editors. . . . It took the December 27, 1937, issue of *Time* exactly six months to get past the Japanese censors and reach subscribers in Japan.

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind. The $5 prize for the best item submitted during August goes to E. S. of Oakland, California, for the story about the oil companies' war on cooperative filling stations published August 20.*]

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

DOROTHY THOMPSON has expanded her article in the April, 1938, issue of *Foreign Affairs* into a little book which is also a great big book if measured by the value of its contents.* It deals with the refugee problem, and its importance may be gauged from the fact that the original article moved President Roosevelt to invite thirty governments to send delegates to the conference at Evian which resulted in the setting up of an international refugee committee headed by that able and unselfish American George Rublee. If the committee functions successfully along the lines laid down in this little volume and succeeds in working out the refugee problem, many millions of people will have reason to call Dorothy Thompson blessed.

Her contentions are simple. Nobody knows how many million people at the present time are wandering around the world seeking a permanent home; one estimate is that there are 9,000,000 of these innocent victims of economic, political, and religious persecution. Dorothy Thompson is right in stressing the fact that their being loose and unsettled in the world makes for the increase of that universal unrest which is driving the world steadily toward war and chaos. As she says: "Millions of people wandering more or less aimlessly and battering at every conceivable door, being passed from frontier to frontier, will certainly do nothing to restore world order." She is eternally right, too, in saying that no democratic country can "wash its hands of this problem if it wishes to retain its own soul." I wish these words of hers could be put into the hands of millions, and not only in the United States:

> The very essence of the democratic principle is humanistic; it involves respect for human dignity and human personality; it implies a revulsion against persecution of individuals; it rejects arbitrary edicts; when its capacity for righteous indignation is exhausted by weariness or callousness, then the democratic principle will die.

She concludes that a defeatist attitude toward the refugees is a defeatist attitude toward democracy itself.

After reviewing the glorious work of Dr. Fridtjof Nansen, Sir Arthur Salter, Albert Thomas of France, Henry Morgenthau, and Charles P. Howland in dealing with the refugee problems which arose immediately after the war, Miss Thompson gives us her definite proposals. Of course she longs most of all for another Nansen, but there is none such. Next she insists that great unused stretches of territory in Brazil, in Africa, and elsewhere can be made available if only the assurance can be given to the nations which possess them that when the immigrants arrive they will be adequately equipped with capital goods and working capital, that they will have been carefully selected for the tasks ahead of them, and that they will be, if not skilled, of the type which can be retrained for agriculture or some other new form of social existence. This has proved entirely possible in Palestine. Miss Thompson says that Palestine has been an enormous success in that it has enabled the sons and daughters of the persecuted eastern Jews to grow up as "healthy creatures who do not bear the stigma of their Jewishness any more, but feel themselves to be free and happy human beings."

The crux of the problem is, of course, where the money is to come from to move these people and give them their working capital. Here Miss Thompson falls back upon a plan which she has worked out with Moritz Schlesinger, a fellow-worker of Nansen's. Her solution is based on the success of the arrangement made by the Jews with the Nazis by which 82,000,000 marks' worth of capital values have been transferred to Palestine in the last five years, making it possible for 14,000 refugee families to settle there, taking their savings with them in the form of goods. The Nazis consented to accept payment in blocked marks instead of foreign exchange, and the Palestine importers abandoned the idea of boycotting German goods. It is true that many oppose the agreement as aiding the Nazis to go on. But the horrible alternative is plain.

There are large blocked sums in numerous other countries, and Dorothy Thompson would have this principle applied wherever possible. In addition she proposes the setting up of an International Resettlement Company to move the refugees and to raise the money from charity or other sources to guarantee the interest on the blocked-currencies loan. She would even utilize the war debts, believing that the United States could concede $5,000,000 of the British debt, for example, in return for which England would guarantee the interest on loans made to the International Resettlement Company. It is an extremely ingenious suggestion. At any rate everything should be tried, for, as Miss Thompson says, "either air will be let in, or eventually we shall all, refugees and non-refugees, fascists and democrats alike, die slowly of economic attrition."

* "Refugees: Anarchy or Organization?" By Dorothy Thompson. Random House. $1.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Nightmare World

THE NAZI PRIMER. Translated from the German by Harwood L. Childs, with a Commentary by William E. Dodd. Harper and Brothers. $1.75.

THE DANUBE FLOWS THROUGH FASCISM: 900 MILES IN A FOLD-BOAT. By William Van Til. Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.

IT IS an exceptional experience to read these two books at the same time. The one is the "Official Handbook for Schooling the Hitler Youth"—seven million German youngsters; the other is the brilliant report of a young American couple's journey down the Danube. The Nazi authors present the ideology behind the coordinated private and political life of Central Europe today. The Americans, children of a happier continent, report what they saw and heard and felt among the victims of the supernationalists. The reader of both books will gain a sense of the reality and complexity of a far-away scene such as no merely theoretical or photographic work could transmit.

The "Nazi Primer" is, thank God, a short book. William E. Dodd, former American Ambassador to Nazi Germany, calls it in his revealing commentary the bible of a political church, the Nazi Party, "where for hundreds of thousands of years German people will be trained to be true National Socialists," as the German Propaganda Minister, the modest Herr Goebbels, once put it. This bible teaches the ABC of what a German of today has to believe if he does not want to end in a concentration camp.

After an extensive abuse of the Mendelian laws of heredity for the purpose of proving the alleged scientific truth of the Nazi racial theory, the Nazi authors rewrite European history. In their story of creation life begins in the early Stone Age at the time when the Norsemen "almost unmixed, acquired new territories and created there as Indo-Iranians, Greeks, and Romans the highly developed cultures of antiquity." From the East nothing came. The origin of European culture "lies in the North, to a considerable extent on German soil. The Germans flooded Europe from the Urals to Gibraltar, from the North Cape to Constantinople. Europe as a cultural and spiritual unity is therefore the work of the Germans." The cultural area extends far beyond the narrow limits of the Third Reich, even farther than the German-language boundary line, which is shown on a map as going through Belgium—the Flemish are suppressed Germans—and including Holland, the Dutch language being nothing else than a German dialect. "These facts make it a duty of the German people not to confine its thinking and dealing merely to the political area of Germany, but to learn to think in terms of their folk policy." The last two chapters of the Primer deal with the successes of the Third Reich. Military freedom has been won; the next goal is economic freedom through the Four-Year Plan, *Ersatz*, and autarchy. As to the ultimate consequence of the thorough mobilization of the German nation, the schoolbook does not speak *expressis verbis*. That is not its purpose. Enough for the start if German youth—confined to a Goebbels world of roaring loud-speakers and uniformed newspapers—think of themselves as the despoiled children of the greatest and most unjustly treated nation on earth. They will be ready in spirit and soul when the Führer calls for the slaughter.

Harwood L. Childs, assistant professor of politics at Princeton University, brought the "Nazi Primer" from Germany, translated it, and has written an excellent objective preface on the educational system of Nazi Germany. He and the publishers are to be congratulated for having put before the American public a document unsurpassed in stupidity and frivolous lying.

William Van Til, an assistant professor of social studies at Ohio State University, traveling with his wife in Europe, found in the fold-boat a means of transportation which brought them in contact with the people whom the railway tourists never meet. Last summer they went down the Danube, enjoying the river and studying five countries—Germany, Austria, then under Schuschnigg, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia. They observed general conditions and the moods and behavior of the dictator-ruled citizens. It was a four weeks' journey costing less than $200, everything included, even the films for the many photographs which illustrate a very stimulating and useful book.

The Van Tils spoke with many people off the record, on water and land. They retell a hundred little stories, describe a hundred characters and landscapes. Nowhere is one conscious of the professor who is pursuing his social studies. These are simply two young human beings adventuring down the Danube, that old pope who has observed so many changes since the Romans built their outposts on his bank and who is indifferent to them all. He carried the small Long Island Duck gently for 882 miles. The captain of the funny little boat and his first mate, whom we appreciate throughout the journey as a very pleasant and capable companion, have caught, with a special instinct for the significance of the insignificant, the atmosphere of Central Europe today. Unhampered by the usual prejudices of the foreigner, they manage to convey its contradictions and tensions in a remarkably effective way.

I was most touched by the story of the poor ragged paper-picker near Backa-Panka. Years ago, on precisely the night after Lindbergh's triumphant return, he got drunk in a New York speakeasy and insulted a friend. The next day he found himself arrested for illegal entry into the United States and was soon afterward deported. Now he makes 700 dinars a month; in New York he made 1,500 dinars, thirty dollars, a week. Oh, how he longs for America, whither he can never return. The day that the Van Tils left he rolled up his pants and waded out to them in the cold water. "Tell me," he said. "How is the Roxy Theater in New York?"

FRANZ HOELLERING

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In the Shadow of Mont St.-Michel

TIDES OF MONT ST.-MICHEL. By Roger Vercel. Random House. $2.50.

IN THE picturesque setting of "Mont Saint-Michel del peril del mar," as it was called in the Middle Ages, Roger Vercel has laid a typically modern story. The depression having wiped out André's easy source of income and his father-in-law's profitable business, he returns to his native Brittany and despairingly accepts a job as an official guide on the historic mount. Laura, his wife, who lacks his culture and spiritual life, cannot accustom herself to this new condition. She dreams of returning to their former life in Paris, while he hunts and fishes with the natives and gradually discovers the beauty of the monument in which he lives. The account of their estrangement has a certain universality, and as the onlooker always wonders in life, one wonders here how André could fail to see how little his wife meant to him. Such minor characters as the guides Hulard and Plantier, Andrea, the cockle girl, and even Madame Montard, the retired prostitute, possess real personalities. Hulard's role in the novel is a difficult one, symbolizing as he does the man of intellect and education who is happy in an inferior position, yet the author has handled him most convincingly.

The peril of the sea is ever present—its inrushing tides, its quicksands, its mists and mirages. André goes out on the sands in all kinds of weather, and his narrow escapes provide thrilling episodes. On the other hand the towering architecture of the abbey—crypts, chapels, cloisters, and precious Merveille—exerts its charm even on those to whom Mont St.-Michel is only half of a title by Henry Adams.

The book suffers, however, from this very variety of interest, which the author must have felt as keenly as the reader. Hesitating between psychological analysis, adventure, and description, the novel leaves one dissatisfied because it has not fully accomplished any of its ends. And M. Vercel in this book remains one of those moderately capable, unoriginal novelists who abound in France and for whom the Goncourt Prize seems to have been created.

A word about the translation. Despite the admirable smoothness of Warre Bradley Welles's rendering, it may be surprising to American readers to learn that women take off their stockings by unfastening their suspenders, to hear of "lanes barely a pace wide," and to find a French deputy referred to as a "member of Parliament." Even the best translations made in England should be gone over with an eye to the American public.

JUSTIN O'BRIEN

Two Villages

GREEN WORLDS. By Maurice Hindus. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $3.

ONCE again Maurice Hindus has written a book of intense interest. This time the author of "Humanity Uprooted" describes superbly two "green worlds," two typical villages dramatically situated on opposite sides of the globe: his native Russian village, where he lived up to the age of fourteen and of which he writes with a pen occasionally dipped in Turgenev ink, and the American village that two or three years later, as a youthful immigrant, he discovered for himself somewhere in New York State.

To anyone who really knew the old Russian village his description of it is startlingly vivid. For there people lived not only with a "wild and boisterous rhythm . . . and wept inordinately, laughed hilariously, swore fiendishly, and danced magnificently," but also with the picturesqueness bred of quiet streams, green pastures, luscious orchards, and golden fields. To the author his home was never the nightmare that many of our distinguished writers found in an old Russian village. True there was the mud, sickening at times, and great poverty and ignorance. But there was also a world of enchantment where silver birches grew and mushrooms and berries were plentiful and lovely water nymphs lured one with their dangerous songs into deep blue lakes and rivers. And there was "the fun and fellowship in the village and adventure and romance." There were Amelko the Screamer, who swore he heard, but never saw, the Evil One riding a colt to death in the stables, and Fyodor the Potato and Hrupina the Witch and peddlers who told of the marvels of distant lands. And there was the house with its four rooms freshly sprinkled with sand; and Father, meek and gentle and boundlessly generous, always giving away to the needy the little he possessed; and Mother, strong and heroic, whose children "kept coming with unrestrained regularity" and who worked for them as no other woman worked for hers.

Out of this archaic world went forth young Maurice to America, to New York with its wonder of white bread and chocolate and shoes. But after the first spell of magic he found that he could not go on living in the "arid zones" of a great city. "I wished I were back in the old village. In spite of its mud, its miseries, its idiocies, there were trees and grass there and immense fields over which I could wander and on which I could shake off physical aches and the bitterness of my soul."

To go back to a village, to go to an American village, was the passionate desire of his life. And without too much trouble or searching he found it—not the world of silver birches he had left behind him, but a world of pine, stout and strong, where food was plentiful and animals were cared for and people "possessed a pattern of living that was as clearly marked out as the roads over which they traveled." Under the guidance of Jim Hoyt, the farmer, and Kent, the hired man, he soon got "the hang of things," so different from that of his old Russian village. "It was the America I yearned for and needed to know."

But even so he could not stay there forever; he had to go on to higher learning, and Elder Jepson suggested Colgate.

In 1923 for the first time he returned to Russia. There he found an exciting human story—"the impact of the revolution on the village." He would write about it. To him it was no assignment in Utopia, for he knew too much about the old Russia to delude himself "into thinking that exalted slogans had overnight conjured forth out of ruin and agony a society of plenty and universal brotherhood." Back in his village after eighteen years he found it outwardly little changed but inwardly seething with passion; the creation of a new world had begun. Seven years later he went back again and immediately became "dramatically aware of an epochal

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

change. The revolution was no longer a formula, a promise, but a process of historical transformation."

In 1937 he revisited his American village, but Jim Hoyt was gone and so were his fine trees, and Elder Jepson and many others. The new machine age had wrought great changes, and here too new ideas had swept through the countryside. A powerful story is this epic of two green worlds.

IRINA SKARIATINA

Inverted Fable

SCOOP. By Evelyn Waugh. Little, Brown and Company. $2.50.

"SCOOP" marks Mr. Waugh's transition from the comedy of bad manners to the amoral or inverted fable. In "Vile Bodies" and "Decline and Fall" the author's formula for humor was simple incongruity. Millionairesses cavorted with Negroes, ladies in Mayfair society owned syndicated South American brothels, and the right honorable daughters of peers swung from chandeliers at champagne parties. The comedy was provided by contrasting the anarchic transgressions of various characters with the rigidity of accepted social patterns. The patterns themselves were never satirized. On the contrary, what made the whole thing so incredibly funny was the mere suggestion that the patterns could be violated. The prevailing *mores* were accepted as so correct that their suggested infringement became synonymous with absurdity. Mr. Waugh is not the father of this particular *snobisme*. It can be traced back through English comedy to Congreve, whose satire—in contrast to Molière's—contained no criticism of society but was a criticism, instead, of those extremists whose behavior endangered prevailing social ritual and order. The Englishman's fear of the outlandish is responsible for an entire school of literature.

In "Scoop" Mr. Waugh, under contemporary pressure, deserts the drawing-room for the arena of the class struggle. The locale is Ishmelia, a mythical Negro country with a recognizable resemblance to Abyssinia, where the author recently served as war correspondent. The plot is strung together on a chain of coincidences as old as Beaumarchais. A nature journalist called Boot is mistaken for a novelist called Boot, and the first Boot instead of the second is sent to cover the war. This mistake in identity and the subsequent lack of professional efficiency on the part of the war correspondent—who, nevertheless, ultimately makes a scoop—heightens the outlandishness of a situation described in these terms:

> . . . they are all Negroes. And the fascists won't be called black because of their racial pride, so they are called white. . . . And the Bolshevists want to be called black because of *their* racial pride. So when you say black you mean red and when you *mean* red you say white . . . and both sides call themselves patriots. . . . But, of course, it's really a war between Russia and Germany and Italy and Japan, who are all against one another on the patriotic side.

The revolution becomes a general source of freakishness and confusion and, like the young lady on the chandelier, represents an implausible divergence from the norm. In this case, however, with the author's broadened scope, the incongruity is no longer behavioristic but moralistic. The war, its moti-

VIRGINIA WOOLF'S New Book

THREE GUINEAS

When voices like Virginia Woolf's are raised against war,—when the eloquence, the anger, the wit, the impassioned brilliance of a mind and pen like Virginia Woolf's are leveled against war and those who make it,—when one of the really great women writers of our day tells her sex what they might do in order to save the world from the shattering follies of war, greed, privilege, false ideals,—then a lot of people are surely going to listen.

This book will remind you of that extraordinary declaration of independence for women—A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN. It is just as civilized and right in its thinking, just as humorous and deadly in its satire; and, for today, much more significant in its message.

•

"It might mark an epoch in the world's history. Why should it not, if it were taken seriously enough?"
—*Times Literary Supplement, London.*

"A witty, scornful, deeply serious piece of pamphleteering marking Mrs. Woolf's growing development away from the precious and the remote. . . . If you are a woman, or anti-war, or both, read it."
—*New Yorker.*

"'Three Guineas' is written with the beautiful precision and in the mellifluous style which distinguish Mrs. Woolf's work. It is marked by her learning, so lightly and often so wittily worn; it contains many passages which those who hope for peace and freedom may well cherish and ponder."
—*Mary Ross, N. Y. Herald Tribune.*

$2.50

Harcourt, Brace & Co.
383 Madison Avenue New York

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vations and consequences, is reduced to the level of animal unconsciousness. The author's apparent intention, as compared with the traditional fable, is to produce an atmosphere of amorality in which various human experiences and values appear ludicrous. In much the same way the predicament of a drowning man must have its humorous connotations to deep-sea fish. Mr. Waugh is neither fish, fascist, nor good red herring. He is a fantast with a defeated purpose. Nothing could be more outlandish. CHRISTOPHER LAZARE

[The price of Walton Hamilton's "Price and Price Policies," published by the McGraw-Hill Book Company, is $4, not $3 as was stated in a recent issue.]

DINNER
for
THEODORE DREISER
Just Returned from Spain
•
Continental Ball Room
ST. MORITZ-on-the-Park
50 CENTRAL PARK SOUTH
Thursday, Sept. 15, at 7 P.M.
Auspices
LEAGUE of AMERICAN WRITERS
Benefit
AMERICAN RELIEF SHIP FOR SPAIN
Reservations **$2.50** per plate
at
AMERICAN RELIEF SHIP FOR SPAIN
381 Fourth Ave., N. Y. C. Room 212
MUrray Hill 4-5301

WESTERN VIEW FARM
Nineteenth Season
• Rates, $6.00 to $8.00 per day, $35.00 per week. • Hospitality that brings guests back year after year. • Excellent food, and comfortable beds. • A beautiful location. • Come for rest and diversion, and return tanned, glowing and invigorated. • 76 miles from New York City, either by automobile or train. *Address:*
TED OHMER
Western View Farm
New Milford, Conn. Tel. New Milford 440

DANCE

Martha Graham at Bennington

ISADORA DUNCAN, Ruth St.Denis, and Martha Graham seem part of the same continuous line. Each of them by the dominance of a unique personality created an epoch in theatrical dancing apart from the classic academic tradition of the rest of the Western world. The work of each has used for a basic impulse a structure of philosophic or moral concepts which has served them better than collaboration with great musicians, painters, or poets. Isadora's Greece was a native expression of Californian pantheism at the expansive end of the last century. Ruth St. Denis's discovery of the East reflected a search for absolute ideas of Oriental truth which Emerson shared and which Fenellosa furthered. Martha Graham finds the expression of her deeply American attitude in her own America. The subject matter of her "American Document," as it immediately proclaims, is our time, our place, our dangers, and our chances of survival. It is the most important extended dance creation by a living American, and if there has been another in any other time more important, there is no record of it.

Bennington, Vermont, is a native American town in the sense that it fulfils perhaps a foreigner's idea of provincial America better than a Southern or Western city of its size would do. It has a New England meagerness, the constraint of sturdy independence, lacks any desire to imitate or presume to the estate of a larger city. The State Armory, which the Bennington School of the Dance has been permitted to appropriate for its fourth annual festival, is not a theater with a stage, and its own peculiar floor plan unquestionably gave a definite character to Miss Graham's choreography. In the excitement of the occasion, with interest divided among the programs of the various teachers and students, it may have been difficult to obtain a proper perspective of the importance of Graham's work as a theatrical fact. When it is presented in New York in the fall, it will be seen as an isolated achievement, as well as a vitally rich vein of dance form and material for future development.

"American Document" is conceived on the basic skeletal structure of a minstrel show. It opens and closes with a parade of participants, using gestures borrowed from minstrel strut and cake-walk. Its episodes are linked by drum rolls and fanfares of acrobatic movement. Its solo numbers are projected against a choral background. It utilized Ray Green's coherent musical score of a spare consistency. It employed a male voice as oracle, comment, and interlocutor declaiming statements from classic American papers. Its episodes commenced with an introductory duet, a preamble for a grave circus, a kind of annunciatory dominant chord of motion from which the rest of the symphony was to be amplified. There followed an Indians' lament for the spirit of the land they had lost, then a statement of Puritan fury and tenderness, an elegy of the emancipated Negro slaves, and a finale of contemporary self-accusation, a praise of our rights, and a challenge to our own powers to persist as democracy.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The whole piece was so nobly framed, so flawlessly executed, that every other work, new or old, offered at the Bennington Festival seemed by comparison puerile, unprofessional, or academic. Graham's work had the sober, frank sincerity of a Thanksgiving hymn heard in the open air. Its surface finish resembled some useful Shaker wood-turning. Its exalted plasticity of formal movement was as proud and objective as a New Bedford whaler's figurehead. The Puritan duet, with Graham in severe white, her partner naked except for white shorts and a dark coat of tan, had as antiphonal Jonathan Edwards's terrible words on fornication and damnation spoken against parallels from the Song of Songs. The tenseness of its emotion, the extreme projection of restrained physicality, rendered the adolescent elements in the audience uncomfortable. Its solemn purity was hard for the shy-eyed of all ages to take. It is so serious that it can only touch those who have the courage to look at it. Happily, most of the audience were too occupied in experiencing it to be frightened of its feeling.

In a short notice there is no space for the complete analysis this work demands. The use of the voice, the dominance of the ideas back of its creation, the quality of Graham's idiosyncratic gesture formulating just what she meant to say, were all miraculous. Graham in her Indian solo was a monument for which the vanishing American has waited three centuries, built from native folk gesture and ritual movement. In the end, in a plain bright red dress, with her dancing balance of suavity and abruptness, her somber levity and steady stops, she seemed an incarnate question of everything we fear and hope for in our daily lives.

Her own dance group, clothed in simply cut clothes of clean transparent colors, made their first entrance like a troupe of erect peacocks driving a chariot. They were ably augmented by the group of lay and professional students from the Bennington School of the Dance. Miss Graham's partner was Erick Hawkins. His strong, solid, angry human dancing provided a splendid support, a positive male presence. Since he had ballet training, he was unacceptable to some of the "modern" dance purists, who were too prejudiced to look at him with clean eyes. Graham's use of a dancer trained in another classicism showed that elasticity which makes her unique in an experimental field. Hawkins, in the questions voiced at the end of the piece, stood and walked like a workman's best idea of himself as a dancer. Nor shall I forget for a long time the presence of the interlocutor, Housley Stevens, Jr., or his beautiful manly voice and arresting appearance, so open and yet so decently serious. He also moved like a dancer, and he spoke grave and alarming words with splendor, because he understood and meant them. Arch Lauterer's distinguished setting was memorably used. At the words "Declaration 1776," four doors at the back suddenly were flung wide open and four blue-clad dancers appeared like visual trumpets.

"American Document" should be presented in New York not as an ordinary Sunday-night "modern" dance concert but as a legitimate theatrical creation. It is dance-drama of the first importance, and is in itself ample justification for everything else the Bennington School may or may not have done in the last five years.

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN

BOOK

ROGER BABSON says: "Buy life insurance as protection, the same as you would buy fire or automobile insurance, but think twice before buying it as an investment."

Life Insurance Exposed

a book, tells how to get the most insurance for the least cost. Send post card for FREE prospectus. A. PHILLIPS, Dept. N, 1481 Broadway, N. Y.

SCHOOL

THE HOME SCHOOL

Country Boarding School open all year — Kindergarten to High School — Jewish Department — Individual attention—reasonable rates—location. Watchung Mts.—30 miles from New York. Address: HOME SCHOOL, PLAINFIELD, N. J.

FOR SALE

FOR SALE. Intellectual retreat, eight miles south of Canton, New York, in foothills of Adirondacks. Fine old farm house in maple grove, large barn, fine spring and trout brook, rolling meadows, 300 acres. Address: Fred Melvin, DeKalb Junction, New York.

APARTMENT TO SHARE

Young Lady, teacher, seeking congenial partner to share modern 3-room apt. located at 2nd Ave. & 11th Street. Call evenings, GR 7-2977.

FOR RENT

808 West End Ave. (99 St.) Apt. 3B. Large front room suitable for 2 girls. Singles, private bath; service, kitchen privileges; reasonable.

RESORTS

Camp Three Arrows On Barger Lake Shrub Oak, N.Y.

For Your Vacation: Good Food, Congenial Company. Boating, swimming, arrangements for riding. $3 daily. $17.50 weekly. Peekskill 3542-R-1.

Hillcrest Lodge among the Watchung Mts. Easy connections via Jersey Central. Golf, tennis, handball, swimming. R. F. D. 3, PLAINFIELD, N. J. Phone Millington 364.

CHILDREN'S HOME

Comfortable country home for children, charming surroundings; supervision, balanced food. Reasonable. Eda Cohen, Mohegan Colony, Peekskill, N. Y.

MISCELLANEOUS

Furniture of all kinds repaired expertly and reasonably. Cabinet work also. Excellent references. Ernst E. Erselius, 148 W. 58th St., TR 7-1789.

LISLE HOSIERY

Lisle mesh and plain stockings made in union mills, sold at wholesale prices. Eastern Hosiery Mills, 303 Fifth Ave., N. Y. C.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING RATES:

62c a line (six words)

Minimum 3 lines

•

THE NATION

20 Vesey Street, N. Y. C. COrt. 7-3330

RESORTS

GREEN MANSIONS

A Complete Modern Camp and Country Club in the Adirondacks

Clubhouse — Each Room With Private Bath.
Private Golf Course on Premises
Champion Tennis Courts
And All Other Sports Facilities
Professional Theatre
Chamber Music

Booklet on Request

LENA BARISH SAM GARLEN
Directors
NEW YORK OFFICE
11 West 42nd Street
BRyant 9-1738

CHI-WAN-DA on the HUDSON

ULSTER PARK NEW YORK
Phone KINGSTON 3978-1329

GALA LABOR DAY WEEKEND!
3 days FRIDAY NIGHT thru Monday dinner $10.75
Entertainment! Orchestra! Social staff, tennis, swimming, boating.

Jacob J. Doroshkin 521 Fifth Avenue MU.2-6773
Sonia Gelbaum & Anna Broude, Associates

BARLOW FARM Candlewood Lake Sherman, Conn.

in the foothills of the Berkshires, 70 miles from New York. Splendid chef, continental kitchen. All modern conveniences, tennis, etc. MAKE RESERVATIONS NOW. Write or phone: New Milford 756-R3
Call N. Y. Office: AU 3-7973 from 9 A. M. to 6 P. M.

When writing to advertisers please mention The Nation

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Letters to the Editors

Northern Waste Lands

Dear Sirs: In your issue of August 20 you discussed briefly the findings of the National Emergency Council concerning the economic ills of the South. After reading your comment I found slightly ironical the article in the same issue on the "breakdown of relief" in industrial cities from western Pennsylvania to Illinois. The conditions of poverty and squalor so acutely described by your traveling correspondents in a section of the country supposed to enjoy high wages, excellent schools, and a social and economic scale superior to the downtrodden South are indeed astounding to an uninformed person.

Years ago during the heyday of Republican prosperity I visited the Northern states on several occasions. The slums of Philadelphia, New York, and Brooklyn and the ramshackle appearance of industrial communities in northern Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania were revolting. In the cities the poverty-stricken appearance of poor whites, foreigners, half-breeds, and Negroes was indeed pitiful. In certain areas of New York City the English language was not even understood.

The blunt truth is that the alleged superiority of the North has been grossly exaggerated. The greatest fault of the North is the huge concentration of population in a few cities, where everybody wants a good job, a fat salary, plenty to spend, and an easy time. Decentralization of the Northern cities and repopulation of the small farms would go a long way toward improving the economic ills of a section of the country worse off today than the South.

C. C. STOCKTON

Richmond, Va., August 23

Courage Needed

Dear Sirs: Many will recall the forthrightness and courage of Dudley Field Malone, who was so devoted to the cause of woman suffrage that, after Woodrow Wilson had gone back on his pledge to support the Susan B. Anthony amendment, he resigned his post of Collector of the Port of New York in protest against the President's action.

The Roosevelt Administration has given prominent positions to many outstanding liberals who have been active in progressive movements for many years—such men as Secretary Ickes, Henry T. Hunt, general counsel of the PWA, Leonard Abbott of the WPA, Frederic Howe, who was formerly a member of the AAA, John A. H. Hopkins of the Social Security Board, and former Governor John G. Winant of New Hampshire, who is representing this country in the International Labor Organization in Geneva.

Mayor Frank Hague of Jersey City, national vice-chairman of the Democratic Party, is America's No. 1 fascist. He has abrogated every civil right, perverted Americanism, framed political foes and sent them to prison. Appeals to President Roosevelt, not for words, but for action, have fallen on deaf ears. The Department of Justice has refused to take cognizance of the menace to liberty constituted by Hagueism in New Jersey, claiming it is powerless though it found legal excuse for action in Harlan, Kentucky. And still the liberals serving under the New Deal are silent.

If some of them would show the stamina and courage of Dudley Field Malone they might induce Mr. Roosevelt to act before it is too late, not only for himself and the Democratic Party but for America as well.

LIVINGSTON SCHUYLER

Jersey City, August 16

Let Us Not Forget!

Dear Sirs: On August 31, 1935, in Moscow, Henri Barbusse passed away. It is difficult to reconcile death with the living character of the man we knew, with the vibrant personality of the former president of the World Committee for Struggle Against War and Fascism.

I had the good fortune to see and hear Henri Barbusse at the United States Congress Against War and Fascism in New York City. The meeting at which he was expected was aglow with excitement. Workers of all races, white, yellow, and black, filled the auditorium and gave vent to a sudden, overwhelming din of applause as a tall, frail, darkly cloaked figure entered from the rear and walked down the aisle to the platform.

He spoke in French, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana giving the translation after each expression of thought. One listened transfixed to the voice of Henri Barbusse. Soft, but with a rush of warm emotion, it penetrated the hushed audience. It rose and fell with a throbbing intensity. What was the message? Something about the workers of Europe, the brotherhood of man, the atrocities of the World War. One hardly heard. The feverish ardor, the vibrant sincerity in that musical voice stirred the soul. The histories of nations loomed up in one's vision—of oppressed, struggling peoples everywhere, of religious wars and persecutions, of the French Revolution, of white Russians and red Russians, of wars for land, for commerce, of a war for democracy.

Since 1935 new atrocities leer at the brotherhood of man, new ghosts of Ethiopia, of China, of Spain rise to plead vainly with a calloused world. When shall they have peace, Henri Barbusse? We need your vibrant spirit. Let us not forget!

GLADYS BOBRICK

New York, August 24

CONTRIBUTORS

LOUIS FISCHER has just returned to Paris after a visit to the battle fronts in Spain.

L. O. PRENDERGAST is *The Nation's* correspondent in Mexico City.

FRANZ HOELLERING, a native of Vienna, was for many years editor of the *Berliner Zeitung.*

JUSTIN O'BRIEN is assistant professor of French at Columbia University.

IRINA SKARIATINA, born in old Russia, is coauthor of "New Worlds for Old."

CHRISTOPHER LAZARE is a frequent contributor to *The Nation.*

INFORMATION FOR SUBSCRIBERS

THE NATION, 20 Vesey St., New York. Price, 15 cents a copy. By subscription—Domestic: One year $5; Two years $8; Three years $11. Additional Postage per year: Foreign, $1; Canadian, 50 cents. The Nation is indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, Dramatic Index, Index to Labor Periodicals, Public Affairs Information Service. Two weeks' notice and the old address as well as the new are required for change of address.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED